

Amendment to the Claims:

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1. (Previously Presented) An instrument system for preparing a disc space between adjacent vertebral bodies to receive a repair device, the instrument system comprising:

at least one distractor including:

a tapered body section for distracting the vertebral bodies in a manner that restores natural lordosis of the lumbar and cervical spines, the tapered body section formed by:

an end wall;

a first pair of opposing wall portions converging toward the end wall; and

a second pair of opposing wall portions converging toward the end wall;

and

a connector section opposite the body section, the connector section for coupling a handle to the distractor, the connector section including a detent element.

2-14(Cancelled)

15.(Previously Presented) A distractor for use in a system that prepares a disc space between adjacent vertebral bodies to receive a repair device, the distractor comprising:

a tapered body section for distracting the vertebral bodies in a manner that restores natural lordosis of the lumbar and cervical spines, the tapered body section formed by:

an end wall;

a first pair of opposing wall portions converging toward the end wall; and

a second pair of opposing wall portions converging toward the end wall;

and

a connector section opposite the body section, the connector section for coupling a handle to the distractor, the connector section including a detent element.

16-20(Canceled)

21.(Previously Presented) The instrument system according to claim 1, wherein the at least one distractor includes a longitudinal axis and at least one of the first pair of wall portions includes a groove that extends generally perpendicular to the longitudinal axis.

22.(Previously Presented) The instrument system according to claim 1, wherein the at least one distractor includes a longitudinal axis and each of the first pair of wall portions includes a groove that extends generally perpendicular to the longitudinal axis.

23.(Canceled)

24.(Canceled)

25.(Previously Presented) The instrument system according to claim 1, wherein the connector section includes a female coupling member.

26.(Previously Presented) The instrument system according to claim 25, wherein the female coupling member is formed by a T-shape slot.

27.(Previously Presented) The instrument system according to claim 26, wherein the T-shape slot defines inwardly facing locking flanges.

28.(Previously Presented) The instrument system according to claim 26, wherein the T-shape slot defines a surface, the surface including a bore for receiving a pilot pin formed at an end of the handle.

29.(Previously Presented) The distractor according to claim 15, wherein the connector section includes a female coupling member.

30.(Previously Presented) The distractor according to claim 29, wherein the female coupling member is formed by a T-shape slot.

31.(Currently Amended) The distractor according to claim 30, wherein the T-shape slot is defines defined by inwardly facing locking flanges.

32.(Currently Amended) The distractor according to claim 31, wherein the T-shape slot ~~defines~~ is further defined by a surface, the surface including a bore for receiving a pilot pin formed at an end of the handle.

33.(Previously Presented) The distractor according to claim 15, further including a longitudinal axis, wherein at least one of the first pair of wall portions includes a groove that extends generally perpendicular to the longitudinal axis.

34.(Previously Presented) The distractor according to claim 15, further including a longitudinal axis, wherein each of the first pair of wall portions includes a groove that extends generally perpendicular to the longitudinal axis.

35.(Previously Presented) The instrument system according to claim 1, further comprising indicia for indicating a dimension of the at least one distractor, the indicia provided by at least one of the walls of the first and second pairs of opposing walls.

36.(Previously Presented) The distractor according to claim 15, further comprising indicia for indicating a dimension of the distractor, the indicia provided by at least one of the walls of the first and second pairs of opposing walls.

37.(New) The instrument system according to claim 1, further comprising a vertebrae immobilizing template, the template constructed as a sleeve member that can be placed about the at least one distractor when the at least one distractor is inserted into the disc space, to fix the positions of the bodies.

38.(New) The instrument system according to claim 37, wherein the sleeve member includes opposing prongs extending therefrom for fixing the positions of the vertebral bodies when the prongs are impacted into the bodies.

39.(New) The instrument system according to claim 37, further comprising a reamer assembly including a reamer having a surface with cutting elements for cutting tissue from endplates of the vertebral bodies.

40.(New) The instrument system according to claim 39, wherein the surface of the reamer defines a tapered profile, the cutting elements simultaneously cutting tissue from opposing endplates of the adjacent vertebral bodies.

41.(New) The instrument system according to claim 39, wherein the reamer assembly further includes a reamer sleeve that operates as a stop to limit reamer travel depth into the disc space.

42.(New) The instrument system according to claim 39, wherein the sleeve member of the template includes opposing prongs extending therefrom for fixing the positions of the vertebral bodies when the prongs are impacted into the bodies, the prongs being impacted such that a surface of the template approximately aligns with a surface of the distractor thereby locating the template so that when the reamer assembly is used to cut tissue from endplates of the vertebral bodies, the reamer of the reamer assembly is disposed at a fixed distance from where a posterior wall of the distractor was positioned within the disc space.

43.(New) The instrument system according to claim 39, further comprising a handle including a coupling member for coupling the handle to the at least one distractor or the template, the handle being useable with the at least one distractor for distracting the disc space and being further useable for placing the template about the at least one distractor after it has been used to distract the vertebral bodies.

44.(New) The instrument system according to claim 43, wherein the handle further includes an impaction member for impacting the template.

45.(New) The instrument system according to claim 43, wherein the template includes at least one ball detent extending from a side surface of the sleeve member that cooperates with the coupling member of the handle to couple the handle to the template.

46.(New) The instrument system according to claim 1, further comprising a handle including a coupling member that connects the handle to the at least one distractor, the handle being useable with the at least one distractor for distracting the vertebral bodies.

47.(New) The instrument system according to claim 1, further comprising a reamer having a surface with cutting elements for cutting tissue from endplates of the vertebral bodies.

48.(New) The instrument system according to claim 1, wherein the at least one distractor further includes a connector section opposite the body section, the connector section for coupling a handle to the at least one distractor.

49.(New) The instrument system according to claim 48, wherein the connector section includes at least one ball detent for use in coupling the handle to the at least one distractor.